

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAA-01 SES-02 SSM-03 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01 AID-05 HA-05
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R 021332Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9039
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: LE, US SY, FR, SOPN
SUBJECT: MINUTE ARTICLE ON AMERICAN ROLE IN LEBANON

1. WE HAVE RECEIVED UNDATED ARTICLE CARRIED IN THE
PARIS NEWSPAPER LA MINUTE ON U.S. ROLE IN LEBANON.
FOLLOWING IS ROUGH TRANSLATION.
2. BEGIN TEXT: IT IS NOW KNOWN HOW CURIOUS DIPLOMATIC
DETOURS RESULTED IN DECISION OF THE SYRIANS TO CARRY OUT
GENOCIDE AGAINST THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN BEIRUT.
3. IT IS AN UNLIKELY SCENARIO, WHERE ONE FINDS
ASSAD, THE DICTATOR OF DAMASCUS, THE LEBANESE PRESIDENT,
SARKIS, AND THE AMERICAN STATE DEPARTMENT. THE RESULTS
OF THE INTRIGUES WERE THE DEATHS OF HUNDREDS OF CIVILIANS,
WOMEN, MEN AND CHILDREN.
4. IT WAS JUNE 25, A SUNDAY, THAT ASSAD HAD HIS REPRESENTATIVES IN BEIRUT ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH PARKER, THE AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED STATES. ASSAD ASKED PARKER

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FOR THE GREEN LIGHT FROM WASHINGTON TO FINISH WITH THE
CHRISTIANS. THE LATTER. . . DID NOT ACCEPT, HOWEVER,
TO BECOME DOCILE SUBJECTS OF THE SYRIANS.

5. SOME BARGAINING FOLLOWED. THE STATE DEPARTMENT
GAVE ITS AGREEMENT: THE ARTILLERY OF ASSAD WOULD HAVE
THE RIGHT TO POUND THE CHRISTIAN QUARTERS. ON JUN 28

AMBASSADOR PARKER PLED HIS CASE BEFORE PRESIDENT SARKIS.

6. "THIS IS A NECESSARY POLICE OPERATION, YOU UNDERSTAND. IT WILL LAST ONLY A LITTLE WHILE AND WILL FINISH THE STATE WITHIN A STATE WHICH THE INDOMITABLE PHALANGISTS REPRESENT," PARKER EXPLAINED. IN THE FACT OF THESE GOOD WORDS, SARKIS FINALLY GIVE HIS AGREEMENT.

7. THE OPERATION THEREFORE BEGAN JULY 1. MONDAY, JULY 3 ALAS, THE SYRIANS HAD NOT FINISHED AND THEY ASKED A PROLONGATION OF 24 HOURS GRANTED BY THE UNITED STATES. TUESDAY, THE SYRIANS ASKED AGAIN FOR A DAY AND A NIGHT. GRANTED ONE MORE TIME. WEDNESDAY . . . THE HELL BECAME HEAVIER AND SPREAD THROUGHOUT EAST BEIRUT. IN THE FACE OF THIS SITUATION WHICH WAS LEADING INEVITABLY TO A SYRIAN SEIZURE OF ALL THE CHRISTIAN ENCLAVES IN LEBANON ISRAEL DECIDED TO INTERVENE. BEGIN SENT HIS FIGHTERS OVER BEIRUT TO INTIMIDATE THE SYRIANS AND TO SHOW THE UNITED STATES JERUSALEM'S DISAPPROVAL OF THE TACIT AGREEMENT WHICH HAD BEEN GIVEN TO ASSAD. MESSAGE UNDERSTOOD. THE DAY FOLLOWING THE OVERFLIGHTS OF THE LEBANESE CAPITAL BY KFIRS MARKED WITH THE STAR OF DAVID, WASHINGTON, WORRIED BY THE REACTIONS PROVOKED IN THE WORLD BY THE MASSACRE AND BY THE ISRAELI THREATS, TOLD ASSAD THAT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. AMERICA TURNED THE LIGHT FROM GREEN TO RED.
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8. AT THIS POINT THE SYRIANS SAID: "MADE EXCUSES. WE CANOT SEEM TO RETREAT BEFORE THE ISRAELIS. FIND AN ALIBI SO THAT FACE IS NOT LOST."

9. IT IS THEN THAT AMBASSADOR PARKER REPORTEDLY INVENTED THE "GAMBIT OF THE MENACE OF SARKIS' RESIGNATION."

10. SARKIS WAS REPORTEDLY ASKED TO MAKE IT KNOWN THAT HE WOULD RESIGN IF THE GENOCIDE DID NOT STOP IMMEDIATELY - A WAY OF GIVING THE SYRIANS AN HONORABLE JUSTIFICATION FOR HALTING THE FIRE OF THEIR LARGE CALIBER WEAPONS. ALL THAT REMAINED FOR SARKIS TO DO WAS TO PUT HIS RESIGNATION BACK IN HIS POCKET, WHILE TACITLY PRAISING ASSAD'S SOLDIERS.

11. IT WAS IN SUM REALPOLITIK. END TEXT.

12. COMMENT. ABOVE STORY HAS NOT YET APPEARED IN THE BEIRUT PRESS. END COMMENT.

DECON 8/4/78

PARKER

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